

Better Quality Salaah for Moms

Tips to help you focus, connect and improve your khushoo
in salaah despite kids' distractions



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Assess your mental readiness — prepare your mind for focus

Know your enemy and avoid him — Shaytaan, and his tricks

Go for gold

Failure or success, never give up.



The first thing that the servant will be called to account for on the Day of Judgement will be salaah. If it is good, his deeds will have been good. If it is bad, his deeds will have been bad. [al-Tabarani., Sahih al-Jaami', vol.1, p. 503]

“A slave may pray and have nothing recorded for it except a tenth of it, or a ninth, or an eighth, or a seventh, or a sixth, or a fifth, or a quarter, or a third, or a half.” (Ahmad; Saheeh al-Jaami’).



INTRODUCTION

You peep open your eyes, the fourth time now, checking whether you can finally make a quiet escape. But she's still sucking vigorously. Carefully, you withdraw the nipple from her grip as she rests her cheeks from the weariness of hours of sucking. Her grip did loosen slightly, but she snaps back at it, grabbing it hungrily again, all the while with eyes closed.

Wanting to avoid a loud unrestricted cry in the dawn; the neighbours are still asleep, and you probably could eat this cake and still have it— satisfy the baby and catch salaah live and on time. Only a few more minutes and she'll be done.

The next moment, your eyes twitched at the bright sunrays entering through the curtains. Oh no! You missed Fajr. Agggaiiin!

And you feel the guilt all rushing at you.

Sounds familiar? I thought so.

Sometimes, it's because you had a sleepless night with your baby, other times, it's *Isha* that suffers like this. And still other times, it's distractions from older kids that keeps you from focusing on salaah, or the unmindfulness that comes from your own self due to routine.

We all have been there; I have been there.

I spent many days searching for books, articles, and Islamic rulings and advice, but I hardly found ones specifically addressing mothers. Maybe no one noticed we have a peculiar struggle on the topic, or only a few thought enough of it, to put pen to paper. Kids are a



blessing, as well as a test. So, we have to find ways to manage our responsibilities.

In this e-book, I'm going to share with you 4 tips I use when I get disconnected, they are what I go back to when I fall, so I can earn my *ajr* in full and start getting meaning to salaah again. Hopefully to help you to focus more on salaah, even with kids' distractions and get you closer to khushoo and improved connection.

If you already grounded about the how-tos of salaah, and want to start keeping focus and reclaim that deep connection with your Rabb through salaah and stop feeling empty, frustrated, overwhelmed, tensed or anxious, then this book is for you, let's dive into the next pages together.

May Allaah bless us with hearts that feel humbled for Him.



Tip 1



MINDSET

- Mindset is crucial to everything. If you often view salaah as a routine to get over and done with— a situation common with us, then you need to change your mindset about salaah. It is a direct, non-mediated communication between you and your Creator. Saying it's a privilege, is an understatement. So be grateful for this moment and enjoy it. It is something you should look forward to and pay attention to, by listening to your own recitations, reflecting on it and staying focused.

This view of salaah might be new and thus it may easily slip you and then you're back to your old mindset. So, always remind yourself by making positive affirmations and reaffirmations. Like telling yourself: "I'm going for salaah, to converse with my Rabb. I'll connect with my Creator and feel tranquil doing it" "I'm going to unplug from worldly distractions and keep my focus in salaah" "In the end, only Allaah matters". Feel free to use your own words if you want.

After all, salaah was the coolness of the Prophet's (ﷺ) eye¹, it can be ours too!

- In order to stay connected in your salaah, you should start 'getting in touch', before salaah— leave the world behind you and be in constant remembrance of Allah outside salaah, read Qur'an, seek knowledge, do dhikr. All these prepare our souls for an easier connection in salaah.

Allaah says (interpretation of the meaning):



“Those who believe (in the Oneness of Allaah- Islamic monotheism), and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allaah, Verily, in the remembrance of Allaah do hearts rest.” [Surah ar-Ra’d: 28]

Also of importance, is that you’re fulfilling your duties to your Creator, yourself, your husband, kids, parents, relatives, neighbours, and humanity. Then seek Allah’s help in your *salawaat* (*sing.* salaah), in relieving your duties and living a worthy purposeful life. May Allaah grant us hearts filled with His love. Aameen.



Tip 2



BABY TRICKS

- If your baby is always tricking you to sleep when it's time for salaah, you're not alone. But you know what? Your baby isn't smarter, not even as smart as you are. So, get on top of your game and be proactive, dear sister. You both will be happy you did. Set a limit to her tricks, if after five minutes she's still sucking and sleepy, but not actually sleeping, you know it's time to stand up to prayer, otherwise you may end up sleeping off too.

Distract her with lights, babies love them. Or perhaps, soft sounds from a radio, Islamic poems or the Qur'an playing on a device; or other toys, to preoccupy her from crying. If she doesn't stop, you may have to let her cry for the few minutes you'll need to make ablution, then carry her in your prayers. I'm not too tough a mom either, but the tough style is a last measure needed for something as important as our salaah. You should try it once and see. It'll all be over in a couple of minutes and she'll gradually learn to keep calm until you finish. I sometimes have to do it with my son, and it amazes me that later on, when he was about 6 months old, once I say the final salaams, he then starts to call for my attention. Yes, at first, even I couldn't believe he knows when salaah ends.

So, let's stop making our babies an excuse for praying late or missing any salaah. We decide what happens. You decide what happens.

- For Fajr, after one of those sleepless night with your baby, the hope of waking up for salaah is sometimes gleam, but it's in the mind.

You must be determined and put your mind to it and make sure to wake for prayer. You may sleep as much as you want thereafter.



You can ask someone to wake you up, maybe your husband, friend or anyone available and ready to help. But, don't totally rely on them, they are humans and can fail or forget.

Remember, **NO EXCUSES!**



Tip 3



PLAN, PLAN, PLAN.

- I think mothers need organization much more than any other type of people. Else, we burn out soon enough.

You've probably heard the phrase "Plan your time around salaah", a lot. Now, what that means is more than including the day's prayer time in your timeline or to-do list. It means rounding up on a task up in your sleeves, before it's time for salaah. If you're someone who finds it difficult to mentally shift from one thing to another, and prefer taking your time to finish a task than moving on to the next, then you've got to watch out for prayer times. Get ready to round up and move on to declutter your head, and relieve your tensions with the tranquillity salaah offers.

Don't let Shaytaan convince you to finish off that task, you can easily continue with your momentum if you 'bookmark' your thoughts by writing it down (if it's a creative task).

- Have a separate room or space for salaah if you can. If not, then clear everything a child may NOT play with and pray in a clear room.
- Pray as soon as salaah enters. Delaying it at all sometimes means missing it altogether or rushing through it near the end of its time, without khushoo. Be flexible, leave off every other thing. Just do it. Answering the call to worship Allaah is greater than everything else you have to do.



Narrated al-Ala that Anas bn Malik said: ‘I heard the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) say: “That is the prayer of the hypocrite: he sits and delays Asr prayer until (the sun) is between the horns of the Shaytaan, then he gets up and pecks four (raka’ahs) in which he only remembers Allaah a little.” (Sahih Nasai 6:512)



Tip 4



ENGAGE

Engage your kids with beneficial activities that will keep them distracted, from distracting you. When it's time for salaah, you can declare a 'state of emergency' in the house, let everyone including your six months old, know (and stop their activities to attend to salaah, especially older kids). Doing this will make you prepare everyone for what's to come, and probably keep them from making distractions.

Try talking gently to your months-old, "Baby, it's time for salaah, you know what that means, exercise patience for mommy, she'll be right back with you". You're not leaving her, but you won't be attending to her for a few minutes as you would, if you were not praying. She may not understand now, she will with time, in shaa Allaah. It is more of reminding yourself to migrate your mind totally to being aware of the great responsibility you're about to face.

'Ali ibn Abi Taalib (may Allaah be pleased with him) would be visibly shaken², and the colour of his face would change, when the time for prayer came. That shows we should prepare ourselves, mind and kids before prayer. You may carry the little one with you while you pray, the Prophet (ﷺ) did that³. And the older ones are imbibing your example, you're inculcating in them good values and preparing them for when it'll be an obligation for them also.

- You can keep younger kids occupied with toys and activities, such as blocks, puzzles and other toys.
- Place babies in a safe place and position, before you start prayer.



The Caveat



THE CAVEAT

Many are times, we cannot avoid distractions from kids no matter how hard we try. So, we should just cope with it, ignore it and refocus on our salaah each time we get distracted. For example, the Prophet (ﷺ) stayed long in sujood when a child climbed his back, of course that could be distracting, but he didn't want to spoil the fun for the child, and so he stayed in sujood, he continued making dhikr and worshipping⁴.

I personally couldn't stomach some misbehaviors from children, even during salaah, especially when they make their younger ones cry. But I later found that, expecting and staying prepared for what is most likely to come— distractions from kids, will let you learn how to ignore them and stay focused in your concentration. When you catch yourself helping her to pick up that fallen toy, eyeing or scolding him for a misbehavior, then know that you're getting too involved in their play, and your attention is getting diverted. Pick up from where you stopped, sis.

Sometimes, we do have to make a little gesture to save us more troubles. In those instances, such as a potential life-threatening situation, small gestures and movements that are within the acceptable limits of salaah are necessary. Such as a child playing with plugged electrical appliance. Making small, non-continuous movements at a time and hitting a palm to the back of the other hand— not exactly clapping, are acceptable in salaah in case the need arises⁵. Even if you have to cut the salaah to attend to situations like the above, don't worry, keep calm and you can start all over again once the coast is clear.



FEW MORE TIPS....

- If someone is available to hold or supervise your kids, please don't hesitate to seek help.
- If you almost always pray alone inside the home, try praying in a *masjid* in congregation, if you can. It's a whole new experience.
- Reciting aloud in loud prayers— *Fajr*, *Maghrib* and *Isha*, helps drown out thoughts. So also, saying the *takbeer* aloud in silent prayers— *zhuhr* and *'asr*.
- Reward yourself at the end of the day, for all *salawaat* done on time and with khushoo, even if it's an expression of excitement and gratitude.

Ask Allaah for more success regarding your prayer. A supplication regarding that from the Sunnah is:

Allaahumma a'innee 'alaa dhikrika wa shukrika wa husni 'ibaadatik

O Allaah! Help me to remember you, to give thanks to you and to worship you in the best manners

You can also observe voluntary prayers after and seek forgiveness. Stay resilient, actions are how they get sealed.

- You can also find someone around to gently make you accountable.



FINAL WORDS...

Now, don't feel overwhelmed, it's not all complicated. Achieving khushoo is really simple if Allah wishes it for us.

Take a deep breath,

1.

Know what you're about to do, remember who you're about to face— the One whom seventy thousand Angels worship daily without ever getting the chance of another turn until the Day of Reckoning⁶; how perfect and mighty He is, the Most Merciful. One of the Taabi'een, when he stood up to pray, his colour would change, and he would say, “Do you know before Whom I am going to stand and with Whom I am going to talk?”⁷.

Miniaturize yourself before your Lord. Know your enemy— *shaytaan*, and take a moment to ponder on this.

2.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “A slave may pray and have nothing recorded for it except a tenth of it, or a ninth, or an eighth, or a seventh, or a sixth, or a fifth, or a quarter, or a third, or a half.” (Imaam Ahmad).

Drown out all other thoughts and focus on the meanings of what you say (pay attention to what you say). Turn your worries into *du'a*, your happiness into gratitude. Go for gold.



3.

Failure or success, never give up. We don't have perfect khushoo every time and that is okay, our level of *eemaan* is not also perfect every time, so glad tidings to those who are bent on improving, never giving up and picking themselves up every time.

Don't quit trying. Spend some minutes to think about your just-concluded salaah. Did you get the most out of it? What do you think made it spectacular? Did you lose track of how many units again? Did you lose focus and get lost in your thoughts again? What do you think distracted you? Note this down, probably in a journal— khushoo journal :). And use positive affirmations to implement lessons learnt in your shortcomings and achievements in your next *salawaat*.

4.

When your mind strays, know that *shaytaan* is winning, don't let him!

**READING THIS BOOK WILL ONLY CHANGE SOMETHING
IF YOU START TAKING ACTION NOW.
REMEMBER TO START WITH THE RIGHT INTENTION.**



As-salaamu alaykum,

I'm Azeezah, a wife and mother of two lovely boys, passionate about spiritual and personal improvement for mothers, Islamic parenting and graphics designing.

Thanks for reading. I pray Allaah blesses us with His love and feeling of awe and humility for Him. Aameen.

If you find this beneficial in any way, please share with others. You earn rewards every time people benefit and improve their salaah because you directed them to something good. Don't just share the e-book, send them to download their copy from our website, so they don't miss other tips and inspiration.

Sharing is caring 😊



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1 Anas reported: The Messenger of Allaah peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Endeared to me in the world are women and perfume, yet the delight of my eyes is in prayer.” [Sunan al-Nasa’i 3939; Graded saheeh according to Al-Albani]

Abdullah bn Muhammad bn Hanafiyyah said: The Messenger of Allah peace be upon him said: “O Bilaal, relieve us with salaah. [Al-Albani classified it sahih in Saheeh wa Da’eef Sunan Abi Dawood]

2 33 ways of developing khushoo in salaah by Shaykh Muhammad Saalih al-Munajjid.

3 It was narrated from Abu Qatadah that:

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) used to pray carrying Umamah. When he prostrated he put her down and when he stood up he picked her up again. [Sunan an-Nasa’i 1204]

4 It was narrated from 'Abdullah bin Shaddad, this his father said:

"The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) came out to us for one of the nighttime prayers, and he was carrying Hasan or Husain. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) came forward and put him down, then he said the Takbir and started to pray. He prostrated during his prayer, and made the prostration lengthy." My father said: "I raised my head and saw the child on the back of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) while he was prostrating so I went back to my prostration. When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) finished praying, the people said: "O Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), you prostrated during the prayer for so long that we thought that something had happened or that you were receiving a revelation.' He said: 'No such thing happened. But my son was riding on my back and I did not like to disturb him until he had enough.'" [Sunan an-Nasa’i 1141]



5 Principles of Fiqh » Jurisprudence and Islamic Rulings » Acts of Worship » Prayer » Rulings on prayer. 12683: Moving whilst praying. Published Date: 2011-06-18 <https://islamqa.info/en/12683>

6 Tafseer Surah at-Tuur: 4

7 *Silaah al-Yaqzaan li Tard al-Shaytaan*, ‘Abd al-‘Azeez Sultaan, p. 209.

